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K. B. WARNER, SECRETARY



THE AMERICAN RADIO RELAY LEAGUE

INCORPORATED.

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED EXCLUSIVELY TO THE WIRELESS AMATEUR.

CABLE ADDRESS
QUIST, HARTFORD

OFFICIAL ORGAN: **QST**
KENNETH B. WARNER, EDITOR.

Executive Headquarters
Hartford, Conn.

October 26, 1927

C O N F I D E N T I A L (to amateurs)

TO: ALL A.R.R.L. AFFILIATED CLUBS, SCMs, AND RMs.
FROM: COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

Dear OMs:

Enclosed is a copy of this week's A.R.R.L. Broadcast for your information.

You already know that the International Radio Conference is in session at Washington. Late this week or early next week it is expected that the Conference will consider matters of the utmost importance to amateurs. So that you may be fully informed, you will receive a short bulletin or further copies of the Official Broadcast as soon as we have any news of importance.

Short-wave radio has developed to its present status during the last decade and practically without regulation -- at least without international regulation. There has been no such conference as this since the London Convention in 1912. At Washington, World Powers are met in conference to decide and agree upon many radio matters. The preliminaries to the Conference are discussed in October and November QST. Short wave signals from one country readily reach many countries and are capable of causing interference troubles there. So short-wave radio is a subject of importance at this Conference and one for which suitable international regulations must be established. The Conference is expected to come to some agreements on short wave allocations early next week -- with the likelihood that the provisions of the Conference will become binding on each of the Nations represented without substantial reservations or changes.

The United States and Canada are all for the amateur just as was predicted in November QST. However, practically every other country represented at this Conference is opposed to these two countries on the subject of short-wave allocations -- either opposed to making any short-wave allocations to amateurs -- or to the extent of the privileges proposed for amateurs by the U.S. and Canada. The position of the representatives of our State Department is not as strong as expected and hoped due to the strong opposition of foreign Powers. What representations foreign amateurs have made to their representatives appear to have produced negative or zero results. The attitude of all the Powers is to successfully compromise.

The situation is most grave for the amateur. The Nations represented at the Conference (with the exception of the United States and Canada, you must understand) have in the past few years, merely tolerated their amateurs. A few privileges have been doled out grudgingly while awaiting a new International Agreement.

Foreign Diplomats are in many instances actuated by government fears and narrownesses and sometimes by commercial cupidity and necessity. The wavelengths from 10 to 200 meters are desired by many, many services, each of which must receive due consideration by the International Conference. Once thought valueless, commercial interests are completely cognizant of the saving in investment in equipment made possible by the use of short-wave in place of long-wave installations. The amateur is freely given credit for his services in developing short waves. However, when the subject of allocations is considered and this Conference goes into business session, the best the amateur can hope is that he may be considered one of the great number of services to receive consideration.

In such a situation the first big work of our amateur representatives at Washington is to obtain recognition of the amateur as a class by the Conference -- then will begin the fight for privileges. Unless the amateur is recognized as a class there will not be an opportunity for any fight for privileges. Most of us can only watch the fight that is being waged from the sidelines. Just how much can be expected is not known at this writing. If our representatives can get official recognition and any privileges at all in the face of such strong foreign opposition, we shall be happy.

Everything possible is being done by the officers of the A.R.R.L. and I.A.R.U. to meet the situation. Secretary Warner, Vice-President Stewart and Ross Hull have been in Washington and have made trips to and from Washington many times in the past several months. For the last three or four weeks, Vice-President Stewart and Secretary Warner have been constantly in attendance at the meetings in Washington. Some of the Conference Delegates have come to learn of the amateur for the first time through contact with our representatives. Much "missionary" work has been necessary. Results are uncertain. At such a time, delegates to the Conference are non-committal. The outcome hangs in the balance.

This letter as we said at the beginning is to inform you of the gravity of the situation. As fast as there is definite news, it will be sent you for the information of your club and A.R.R.L. members.

Sincerely yours,

F. E. Handy.
Communications Manager

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Enc.